

Cemetery Fees To Rise

By SUSANNA SHEEHAN

The cost of dying in Duxbury just got more expensive.

Selectmen Monday night approved fee hikes for cemetery services including the cost of graves, niche wall spots, interments and cremations.

As of January 1, 2004, the cost of a burial plot for a resident will increase from the current \$275 to \$500. For a non-resident, it will be \$1,000, up from \$550. These price increases include higher charges for perpetual care, burial rights and the cemetery's care and improvement fund.

Niche wall costs will rise, too. The total price per niche for a resident will be \$305, instead of \$255. For a non-resident, the cost will be \$455 instead of \$355. Cremation lots will also cost more: \$180 for a resident, instead of \$130, and \$330 for a non-resident, instead of \$230.

The cost of cremation will rise to \$190 from \$175. Cremation interment will increase \$25 to \$200. Full

interments will rise by \$100 to \$400, more on Saturdays.

According to Cemetery Director Joseph Ziobro, Duxbury is the first town in the area to increase its rates, but others have been considering it.

"We're still competitive," said DPW director Tom Daly.

The crematory generates money for the town. It will make \$203,000, said Daly. However, it costs \$60,000 to reline the two retorts every year. Daly said he also wants to spend \$80,000 to design a new crematory, which would cost \$800,000. He plans to ask the town for this next year. A new crematory would have a new building and new machinery.

The fiscal advisory committee approved these fee increases and others for the town clerk and harbormaster. In a memo to selectmen, the committee stated that it agreed with "regular reasonable fee increases" but it cautioned that it "does not support the concept of town wide fee increases as a means to attempt to balance the town's budget."